

Message Text

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73

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 COME-00 SCI-06 FEA-02

INT-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIEP-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /144 W

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R 181427Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2776

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, NL, SA

SUBJ: ENERGY: RUMORS OF SAUDI PLANS TO BUILD
REFINERY IN DELFZIJL

1. THREE LOCAL DAILIES REPORTED JAN 17 THAT DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN UNDERWAY SINCE SEPTEMBER FOR SAUDI/DUTCH JOINT VENTURE (WITH POSSIBLE FRENCH PARTICIPATION) TO CONSTRUCT PETROLEUM REFINERY AND PETROCHEMICAL PLANT AT DELFZIJL ON DUTCH NORTH COAST. PAPERS QUOTE MINECON AND SAUDI EMBASSY SOURCES AS CONFIRMING STORY IN BROAD OUTLINE AND ADDING THAT DISCUSSIONS NOW SUSPENDED UNTIL OASPEC EMBARGO AGAINST HOLLAND IS LIFTED.

2. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE GET DETAILS OR SOLID CONFIRMATION

OF THIS STORY FROM ANY OFFICIAL SOURCE. SECRETARY GENERAL RUTTEN OF MINECON SUGGESTED TO ECON COUNSELOR THAT PRESS IS "GUESSING" BUT DID NOT DENY STORY OUT OF HAND. WE CONSIDER
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IT LIKELY THAT VERY PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS ALONG REPORTED

LINES HAVE TAKEN PLACE.

3. GON HAS BEEN TRYING FOR YEARS TO GENERATE OIL COMPANY INTEREST IN DELFZIJL AS IT IS IN RELATIVELY UNDERDEVELOPED AREA BUT SITE OF ONE OR TWO MAJOR ENERGY CONSUMERS, INCLUDING AN ALUMINUM SMELTER. IT IS ALSO LIKELY TO BE LANDING POINT FOR PIPELINE FROM OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS WELLS IN NETHS NORTH SEA. MAIN DRAWBACK IS LIMITED CAPACITY FOR TANKER MOVEMENTS (MAXIMUM DRAFT 40,000 TONS, INCREASING TO 57,000).

4. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER IF AND WHEN ALLEGED DISCUSSIONS REACH MORE DEFINITIVE STAGE.
GOULD

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